



MBNMS Discover Your Central Coast Lecture Series (May – 2014)

Location: Rabobank (1070 Main St, Cambria, CA 93428) Time: 6:30-7:30pm
(\$5.00 donation at the door)

May 2 – Sanctuary sentinels: counting seastars and measuring the radioactivity of kelp to assess the health of the nearshore ecosystem by Dr Steve Lonhart, SIMoN Senior Scientist, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
Dr Steve Lonhart is an active research diver and currently involved with several monitoring projects within kelp forests from Monterey to Cambria. He will be discussing two specific projects: Kelp Watch 2014 and Sea Star Wasting Syndrome, both of which have the potential to affect the health and diversity of kelp forests. In addition to presenting the latest data on these projects, the audience can expect to enjoy numerous images of underwater marine life, most of which were taken along the Big Sur coastline.

May 9 – From jellies to sea turtles: A big picture look at the biotoxin domoic acid in marine food webs of central California by Heather S. Harris, DVM, MPVM

Leatherback sea turtles that occur along the California coast are part of the critically endangered and declining western Pacific population that nest in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands. These turtles undergo a vast trans-Pacific migration to forage seasonally on dense aggregations of jellies off our coast. The biotoxin domoic acid causes significant illness and death in marine wildlife that share this nearshore marine habitat. Harmful algal blooms and jelly abundance appear to be increasing as a result of changing ocean conditions, potentially in response to the cumulative effects of human impact. Come join Dr. Harris to learn about her research investigating domoic acid exposure in the leatherback sea turtle food web within the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and big picture implications for marine ecosystem health.

May 16- Condors and Coast: A Natural Connection by Joe Burnett, Sr. Biologist and Big Sur Condor Program Coordinator for Ventana Wildlife Society since 1997

The California Condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*) population historically experienced severe losses, prompting the complete removal of the species from the wild in 1987. A successful captive breeding effort allowed reintroduction of captive-born condors in southern California starting in 1992. From 1997-present, Ventana Wildlife Society, in collaboration with federal and state partners, has been reintroducing condors in California's central coast region, an important part of their historic range. Lead poisoning and DDE induced eggshell thinning are currently the two biggest survival threats to free-flying condors in CA. Presently, resource intensive field management efforts help offset the detrimental impacts of these contaminants. Come join Joe Burnett as he provides the most current information on the status and health of our central CA condor flock and explains the important role the coastal environment plays in sustaining our local population.

May 23 NO PRESENTATION (Memorial Day weekend)

May 30 – What's taking a bite out of the Southern Sea Otter recovery?

by Mike Harris, Senior Environmental Scientist, Calif. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

The Southern sea otter population is not recovering as expected. During the last 40+ years, this population has experienced periods of stagnation or decline. Through intensive monitoring of this population, resource managers have been able identify sources of mortality and to mitigate some impacts. Recent data suggests an increasing shift in mortality that does not have an obvious remedy: Bites from white sharks. Mike will present a status update on the southern sea otter population, ongoing research and monitoring efforts and will discuss implications of the increasing trend of sea otter-shark interactions..